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## Omega-3 fatty acids: their beneficial role in cardiovascular health.

[Schwalfenberg G](#)

*Can Fam Physician* 2006; 52:734-40.

### Abstract

**OBJECTIVE:** To examine evidence for the role of omega-3 fatty acids in cardiovascular disease. **QUALITY OF EVIDENCE:** PubMed was searched for articles on the role of omega-3 fatty acids in cardiovascular disease. Level I and II evidence indicates that omega-3 fatty acids are beneficial in improving cardiovascular outcomes. **MAIN MESSAGE:** Dietary intake of omega-3 fatty acids has declined by 80% during the last 100 years, while intake of omega-6 fatty acids has greatly increased. Omega-3 fatty acids are cardioprotective mainly due to beneficial effects on arrhythmias, atherosclerosis, inflammation, and thrombosis. There is also evidence that they improve endothelial function, lower blood pressure, and significantly lower triglycerides. **CONCLUSION:** There is good evidence in the literature that increasing intake of omega-3 fatty acids improves cardiac outcomes. Physicians need to integrate dietary recommendations for consumption of omega-3 fatty acids into their usual cardiovascular care.

### MeSH

Canada; Cardiovascular Diseases; Drug Interactions; Fatty Acids, Omega-3; Humans; Nutrition Policy

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